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The Happy Day

A Farce in One Act

By
OCTAVIA ROBERTS



BOSTON
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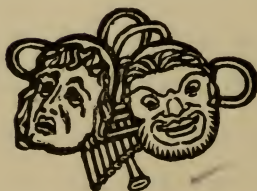
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The Happy Day

CHARACTERS

MRS. MARLOWE, *middle-aged and pretty.*
ANNE LORING, *a neighbor.*
SYBIL MARLOWE, *the bride.*
KITTY FERN, *a dressmaker, middle-aged and a little gray.*
OPAL NEFF, *society reporter of the "Daily Clarion."*
MRS. TATLOCK, *a country relation.*
POLLY TATLOCK, *her daughter.*



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JUL -1 1915

no.

The Happy Day

SCENE.—*A well furnished family living-room, with one or two windows and two doors. There is a small desk on one side of the room and a short divan on the other near a table on which stand a sewing basket and telephone.*

(MRS. MARLOWE, a pretty, middle-aged woman, is seated on the divan running ribbons in lingerie. ANNE LORING, a young friend and neighbor, is seated at the desk making out a wedding list from a directory.)

ANNE. Abbots. What about the Abbots?

MRS. M. Church. Only Sybil's dearest friends are to be invited to the house.

ANNE. The Abercromies?

MRS. M. Hardly! Not at *my* daughter's wedding.

ANNE. Adcock. Mrs. Jennie Adcock?

MRS. M. Oh, dear me, I don't know. Sybil doesn't care for Nettie Adcock, but Mrs. Adcock is in my church society.

ANNE. Mrs. Adcock will be hurt if you leave her out, Mrs. Marlowe, I can tell you that. Only yesterday she was asking me to tell her whether I thought Sybil would like a silver pitcher or an onyx clock.

MRS. M. Dear me, did she? If we could only ask her without including Nettie! (*Sighs.*) Well, put them down for church and house. Excuse me, Anne, while I ring up the florist's. It's hard for me to keep my attention on this list, my mind is so distracted. (*Telephones.*) 481 Main. Is this Penn the florist's? What about the white lilacs for my daughter's wedding? This is Mrs. Marlowe. Through blooming? How's that? Are you sure? Have you tried everywhere? Peonies! They won't do at all. They'd spoil our entire color scheme. I'll have to come down and talk it over. I'm too upset now to come to any decision.

ANNE. How about the Aldises? (*Turns and sees that something has happened to ruffle the older lady.*) What's the matter?

MRS. M. Matter ! Penn can't get the lilacs. He says it will be too late for them. They're about over.

ANNE. Can't get the lilacs ? Why, we've told every one it's to be a lilac wedding.

MRS. M. That's what makes it so trying ! A lilac wedding without any lilacs ! Who ever heard of anything more ridiculous ? However, it can't be helped. Let's go on with the list. The invitations ought to be here any time.

ANNE. Allens ?

MRS. M. Well —

ANNE. Sybil will want George Allen. He's a great friend of the doctor's.

MRS. M. That's the trouble with marrying a doctor. All his patients expect to be invited to the wedding.

ANNE. Where is Sybil, anyway ? It's hard to do much without her.

MRS. M. I made her stay in bed this morning. She came home from the dance last night very much upset over something. I could hear her tossing about and crying all night.

ANNE. Crying ! At this happy time, with boxes and boxes of new clothes coming home every hour of the day ; with parties in her honor from morning till night. I'm so happy just over the prospect of being maid of honor that I can't think of another thing.

MRS. M. (*sighing*). Yes, that's what every one tells her ; that this is the happiest occasion of her whole life—these days before her wedding. Sh ! I hear her coming. (*Rises.*) I'll go get her chocolate, and you try to find out what has disturbed her.

(*MRS. M. leaves the room by one door just as SYBIL MARLOWE enters by the other. SYBIL is a pretty young girl, but she looks both tired and troubled.*)

ANNE. Hello, Syb.

SYBIL. Good-morning, Anne. Have the invitations come ?

ANNE. No, but your mother and I have begun the list. We are in the A's.

SYBIL. Don't ask Nettie Adcock. Any mail for me ?

ANNE. Yes, three notes. Do read them. I can hardly wait to see if any one else is to give anything for you. (*SYBIL seats herself on the divan and opens the notes while ANNE leaves her work at the desk and perches on the arm of the seat, her arm around SYBIL'S neck.*) Anything exciting ?

SYBIL (*with evident pleasure*). Kitty Dickerson wants to give a luncheon for the bridesmaids. Grace Spencer asks us for bridge and Mrs. Clark, mother's old friend, wants to give—a Tango party, with a dawn breakfast.

(*At this point SYBIL's face, which has been bright and happy, becomes clouded. She drops the open note, and stares mournfully into space.*)

ANNE. How lovely! What's the matter, Sybil? Tell your old Anne. You never kept anything from me in your life.

SYBIL. Oh, Anne, I'm so unhappy. George and I have quarreled.

ANNE. When? Where? When have you had time to quarrel? We've all been on the go so much.

SYBIL. Last night when we were dancing the Castle. He said—what do you think he said?

ANNE. Gracious, Sybil, what?

SYBIL. He said he wouldn't stand for any more of this nonsense another day.

ANNE. Nonsense! What nonsense?

SYBIL. The entertaining, the dances, the teas and all the fun. He said the weaker sex might be able to stand the nightly racket, but that no mere man could stand the strain. He said —

(*MRS. M.'s entrance with a breakfast tray interrupts the girls' confidences.*)

MRS. M. Here's your chocolate, dearest. Try and get it down. Where were we in the list, Anne?

ANNE. A's. Do you want the Ayers?

SYBIL. } No!

MRS. M. } Yes.

SYBIL. Mother! The Ayers! What for? I never had anything to do with them in my life.

MRS. M. Mr. Ayers and your father are directors in the same bank. We must certainly have the Ayers.

SYBIL. The whole family? And to the house?

MRS. M. I am afraid so, dear.

ANNE. Ayers, church and house?

MRS. M. Church and house. (*Pauses uncertainly.*)
Question mark after house.

(*She leaves the room.*)

ANNE. Then what did he say, Sybil?

SYBIL. He said that he positively refused to go out again at night to any function until after we were married.

ANNE. Sybil! Not even to the ball our sorority is giving to-night?

SYBIL. Not even to my sorority ball! He said a surgeon owed it to his patients to keep his nerves steady, and I owed it to him to keep *my* nerves steady. (*Lifts her cup to her lips with a shaking hand.*) And they are steady! Oh, why is chocolate always so hot?

ANNE. But how do the parties interfere with his patients? He never has an operation before nine A. M., and we've been home every night this week before daylight.

SYBIL. That's what I told him, but he wouldn't give in. It's a test case, Anne, this dance to-night. If he won't go, I won't marry him. I tell you I won't. Were these the only letters?

ANNE. Yes, dear, the only ones.

SYBIL. And he hasn't telephoned?

ANNE. No, he hasn't telephoned. Nobody has telephoned but the reporters.

SYBIL. Oh, the reporters! They're terrible! They're killing me. Did you tell them that we wished nothing in the papers?

ANNE. Yes; but they're very persistent.

(KITTY FERN *appears, pushing a sewing machine before her. She is a middle aged, gray haired little spinster, with the hollow chest of one who has bent over her work for many years. A pincushion bristling with pins and needles is pinned at her side, and a tape measure hangs about her neck.*)

SYBIL. Who's that? Gracious, how you frightened me!

KITTY. Only Kitty Fern, young ladies. Excuse me for intruding, but I was froze out of the sewing-room.

SYBIL. What was the matter with the sewing-room?

KITTY. Ma ain't broke it to you then about the furnace? (*She places her sewing machine at the back of the room, and, taking a negligée from a basket that stands on the leaf of the machine, she approaches SYBIL coaxingly.*) I hate to trouble you, pet, but you'll have to let me slip this on. I've got where the figure don't do no good.

SYBIL. I'm so tired from dancing, I can hardly stand on my feet. *(She reluctantly rises, and KITTY slips the negligée on, over her dress.)* What about the furnace? Go on.

KITTY. Boiler's busted.

SYBIL. When?

KITTY. This morning. We're waiting now on the feller who's coming to fix it. This is the only warm room in the house.

SYBIL. Mercy, what next? Will the boiler be all right for the wedding?

KITTY. I can't tell you that. Boilers has a way of busting at the wrong time. Turn around, darling. Shall I put a cord around the waist, or a ribbon? *(Bell rings.)*

SYBIL. I don't seem to care, Kitty. Tie a piece of carpet binding around me if you want to. *(KITTY removes the negligée.)* Isn't the bell ringing? Why doesn't Nora answer it?

(SYBIL quickly sinks into the chair on which she has been leaning from time to time during the fitting, but KITTY has already come forward with still another garment. She briskly assists her young mistress to her feet and slips a kimono on the drooping figure.)

KITTY. Haven't they broken it to you yet about Nora?

SYBIL. Mercy, no!

KITTY. Left! Up and left this morning.

SYBIL. Left! Nora left, just before the wedding!

KITTY. That's what she done. *(Busy with alterations on the kimono.)* Claimed her legs was wore out answering the door-bell; her ears was wore out answering the telephone; her head was wore out trying to remember messages. Turn around, pet. I can't see what I'm doin' if you jerk about so. There!

(Removes the kimono.)

SYBIL. Thank goodness! I'm ready to drop.

(SYBIL again sinks into the chair in an attitude of utter weariness, her head falling on her breast, her arms hanging at her sides. From a capacious pocket in her apron KITTY draws forth a breakfast cap. She raises the girl's head and puts on the cap, trying the effect of ribbons and flowers. At this point MRS. M. enters with several boxes containing the invitations.)

MRS. M. Here, girls! Here's something to cheer us up. The invitations have come at last.

ANNE. Good!

SYBIL. Really? Are they pretty? What's the matter?

ANNE. Mrs. Marlowe!

MRS. M. Gracious, what's happened?

ANNE. They've made a dreadful mistake.

SYBIL. A mistake?

(SYBIL tries to turn her head in her mother's direction, but KITTY, engrossed in her handiwork, holds the girl's head rigid, and continues to bedeck the cap.)

KITTY. Hold your head still, pet.

ANNE. They read: "Dr. George Quack" instead of "Dr. George Quick."

SYBIL. Quack! Quack! What shall we do?

KITTY. Never mind, Miss Sybil. Quack sounds real pretty, and all your friends who know him will sense his right name, and them that don't will never know different.

SYBIL. But Quack for a young doctor, trying to make a name for himself. Dr. Quack! It couldn't be worse.

ANNE. Oh, Sybil, it's dreadful.

KITTY. I knew an undertaker once named Graves, a lawyer named Crook and a real smart fellow named Gump. Nobody held it against them. You can't help them things.

ANNE. But this is so unnecessary. If Dr. Quick's real name was Quack, we might have the grace to bear it; but when it's only a careless mistake of the engraver——

MRS. M. I'll take them back and see what can be done. Keep on with the list, Anne. Here's Mrs. Quick's list and here's the doctor's. (*Shows list.*) It's a mile long. Where I'm to seat them all, I don't know. (*Turns to SYBIL.*) Sybil, dear, you look feverish. Go out in the garden and get some air. Anne, go with her for a few minutes, that's a dear.

(MRS. M., laden with the invitations, goes out.)

SYBIL. I believe I will go outdoors, Anne. (*Picks up an armful of lingerie her mother has left on the divan.*) Oh, Anne, look at all this lingerie: fifty hand tucks in this piece alone; and all for a man who would rather cut out a stranger's appendix than go to the sorority ball!

(SYBIL and ANNE leave the room. KITTY, left alone, sews cheerfully on the machine. The clatter prevents her hearing the entrance of a young woman, in a well tailored business suit. The newcomer stares about her, draws a chair forward and seats herself with much assurance. This is OPAL NEFF, society reporter of the "*Daily Clarion*."')

OPAL. Good-morning.

KITTY. For the love of Mike!

OPAL. I rang several times, but no one answered the bell, so I took the liberty of coming right in.

KITTY. You did, did you?

OPAL. Miss Neff, Opal Neff of the *Daily Clarion*. I just called to ask if I might see some member of the family in order to get a few points about the approaching wedding. Anything concerning the bride is of interest, wedding gown, going away gown, costumes of the wedding party, names and number of the bridesmaids, gift of the groom, plans for the honeymoon, and so forth.

KITTY. I am sorry to tell you the family won't see you. They won't have one word in the papers.

OPAL. That's all very well to say, but news is news, and when a social favorite marries a rising young physician she owes it to the public to give the press a few particulars.

KITTY. Well, you won't get 'em out of me.

OPAL. If you don't care to talk, I wouldn't force you to for the world. You don't mind, I suppose, if I sit here for a few moments? I got chilled through coming out. The spring wind is very sharp.

KITTY. I can't deny you that right, I suppose, although we're all pretty busy around here.

(*She sews up a breadth on the machine.*)

OPAL. Do you mind telling me who you are? I'm rather intuitive, and I suspect that you're one of the New York relatives.

KITTY (*much pleased*). Well, did I ever! (*Lets her work drop from her hands.*) I'm only Kitty Fern, the home dress-maker.

OPAL (*approaching the machine and examining KITTY's work*). You're working on the wedding gown, Madame Fern, I suppose?

KITTY. Dear me, no. They wouldn't trust me with that job. Madame Celeste is none too good.

(OPAL covertly makes a note of the dressmaker's name in a little pad she carries in her hand.)

OPAL. Oh, yes. I remember hearing that Madame Celeste was to make the trousseau. Does she make the blue charmeuse gowns for the nine bridesmaids?

KITTY. Blue charmoose! The girls are to wear white teffeta, and there are only three of them, two besides Miss Anne.

(OPAL makes a note of this information.)

OPAL. Miss Anne?

KITTY (*clapping her hand over her mouth*). I declare! If I didn't almost let the name out.

OPAL (*musings*). Miss Anne and two others. One is the groom's sister, is she not, and the other perhaps a relative of the bride?

KITTY. The groom's sister you have right enough.

OPAL. Miss Marlowe has no girl cousins?

KITTY. Well, there's Polly Tatlock, of course, and Miss Sybil's pa held out for her, she bein' his only cousin's daughter; but they downed him, they did, Miss Sybil, Miss Anne and Mrs. Marlowe. You see havin' her would have spoiled the plan of havin' just the girls who graderated at Ellumwood together.

OPAL. I see! I think I have an Elmwood catalogue. And so Miss Polly Tatlock lost out?

KITTY. Miss Polly Tatlock lost out. She wouldn't have been no ornament, a gawky country girl like her.

OPAL. How did such a fine dressmaker as Madame Celeste happen to choose figured foularde for the bride's gown?

KITTY. Figured foularde! It's liberty satin, trimmed with point lace.

(OPAL makes another note on her pad.)

OPAL. Is the lace the gift of the groom?

KITTY. Certainly not! Miss Sybil wouldn't take lace from her young man.

OPAL. The groom gives nothing at all, then? How extraordinary!

KITTY. Nothing! Do you call a diamond pendant nothing? Set in platinum?

(OPAL makes a note of the groom's gift. Glancing about the room, she points to one of the photographs.)

OPAL. The pendant must be very becoming to a girl of this type.

KITTY. That's not Miss Sybil. That's her best friend, Miss Anne Loring, next door neighbor.

OPAL (*quickly*). And maid of honor, of course. (*Jots down the name on her pad.*) Then this is Miss Sybil, the girl with the violin? (*Points to another photograph.*)

KITTY. No, that's just a friend. Miss Sybil don't fiddle.

OPAL. No accomplishments at all?

KITTY. No accomplishments! She dances fairy dances in bare feet, she makes fudge and rarebit on the chafing dish, she cross-stitches towels, she does everything that a young lady needs to do that's about to be married.

OPAL. And she likes dogs?

(*Points to a picture of a girl with a dog, above the mantel.*)

KITTY. Well, you found her, all right. Pretty picture, ain't it, with little Carlo?

OPAL. Perfectly sweet. Go and ask if I can't have a cut made from it, won't you, Madame Fern?

KITTY. It won't do no good.

OPAL. Just go to please me, that's a dear. I've come so far to get nothing at all.

(KITTY reluctantly leaves the room, speaking again as she goes.)

KITTY. I'll go, but it won't do no good.

(*Left alone, OPAL springs on a chair and takes down the picture. SYBIL, in hat and cloak, comes in from the garden and surprises her in the act.*)

SYBIL. What are you doing?

OPAL (*coolly, from her perch on the chair*). Who's asking, please?

SYBIL. Sybil Marlowe. What are you doing?

OPAL. Glad to meet you, Miss Marlowe. Cold out, isn't it?

SYBIL. What are you doing with my photograph under your coat? I know who you are! You're a reporter! Give me that picture instantly, and leave the house.

OPAL. Take it, then. (*Offers it, but holds on to it.*) I have one in my bag that we can run just as well.

(*She presents a photograph for SYBIL's inspection.*)

SYBIL. That's not my picture, that flashy actress.

OPAL. Do you like this better?

(*Extends a second photograph.*)

SYBIL. That dowdy frump? Certainly not. What are you trying to do?

OPAL. I've been sent here to get a story about the wedding and to bring back your picture. If you won't give me one, I'll have to use one of these. Should you prefer that I did that?

SYBIL. I prefer you to leave me and my private affairs alone. I don't care to be in the paper. I won't be spoken of as "an accomplished social favorite." I won't have Dr. Quick written up as a "rising young surgeon, a favorite of the younger set." I won't —

OPAL. Say, you've got a temper, haven't you? Cool down, and I'll tell you something. You can't get married and keep out of the papers; and if you're going to be in, you want to be in right. Would you like it any better if I spoke of you as a social lemon, and your young man as a business dub? Of course you wouldn't. When you come up against the press, you might as well hold up your hands and be agreeable. Did you say I could have the picture?

SYBIL. Take it! Take it! Only go. I did think I might have a quiet little wedding, the way I wanted it, without any publicity; but I see I shall not be allowed to do so.

(*She throws herself on the couch and buries her head in the pillows.*)

OPAL. You're asking a good deal. Very few people can consult their own wishes when it comes to getting married—or buried. Thank you for the picture.

(KITTY enters. Without noticing SYBIL she addresses the reporter.)

KITTY. I couldn't find her. She wouldn't of let you have it anyway. And now you'll really have to be going. If I let fall anything I should not have done, I hope you'll keep it to yourself.

OPAL. Oh, certainly. Anything confided to a reporter is always strictly confidential. Good-morning.

(OPAL withdraws as easily as she entered, KITTY following in her wake, to prevent any possible return. ANNE, in hat and coat, runs in excitedly from the garden and addresses SYBIL reproachfully.)

ANNE. Why did you run away when Dr. Quick came into the garden? You certainly didn't think he wanted to talk to me.

SYBIL. Why should I stay? He certainly can't pretend to care anything about me after the way he has acted about the sorority ball.

ANNE. You'd think he cared about you, if you could see the way he's pacing about the garden, trampling on the tulips.

SYBIL. Think how he's made *me* suffer. I didn't sleep one wink all night.

ANNE. You may not have slept, but you ate. You drank your chocolate, for I saw you. Dr. Quick hasn't eaten one mouthful since your row, and he was so upset this morning he very nearly amputated a perfectly good leg.

SYBIL. Did he take back what he said about not going to any more parties?

ANNE. Take it back? He said it all over again.

SYBIL. What does he expect me to do?

ANNE. He wants you to come out this very minute and take a little spin in his car.

SYBIL. What for? Pleasure?

ANNE. To talk it all over. He says he can't believe you are going to put a dance before your own health and his profession.

SYBIL. That's his way of putting it. Suppose I don't speak to him until he gives in?

ANNE. You've got to, Syb. He gives you just ten minutes to make up your mind. He's in his car now, and he says if you don't come the third time he blows the horn, he'll drive off for good and all.

SYBIL. Let him for all I care !

(At this point MRS. M., in bonnet and coat, appears in the room in great agitation. The girls run forward to her assistance and help her into a chair. In their preoccupation, neither of them notice the first long honk of the doctor's horn.)

MRS. M. Oh, girls!

GIRLS. What's the matter?

MRS. M. Help me off with my things. I feel as if I were about to faint.

SYBIL. Mother! What has happened?

MRS. M. Oh, I've had such a time.

ANNE. Couldn't they correct the mistake in the invitations?

MRS. M. I don't know. I think so. I've forgotten what they said. I've had such an unpleasant encounter.

ANNE. Encounter? Who with?

SYBIL. Not George?

MRS. M. My husband's cousin, Mrs. Tatlock. I met her in front of the interurban station, where she attacked me. She really was violent. She drew a crowd.

SYBIL. Attacked you, mother? What about?

ANNE. What about, Mrs. Marlowe?

MRS. M. About Polly. About not asking her daughter Polly to be a bridesmaid. She said—but what didn't she say?

ANNE. What could she say?

MRS. M. That Polly had looked forward to being bridesmaid; that Polly was your only cousin in Redwood County; that Polly was as good as you were, even if she did live in the country. It was terrible.

ANNE. What did you do?

MRS. M. I tried to calm her down. Finally I got her to promise to come up here and let me explain.

(No one notices second long blast of horn.)

SYBIL. But there's nothing to explain. I didn't want her. I never had anything to do with her in my life.

MRS. M. That's just what I want you to tell her, Sybil, when she comes.

SYBIL. I? Oh, mother! You don't expect me to talk to her, do you?

ANNE. Is she really coming here?

MRS. M. She'll be here any minute. Who's that on the porch now?

ANNE (*going to the window*). A middle-aged woman, with a fish net shopping bag, and a tall girl. She's glowering up at the window.

(*Bell rings violently.*)

SYBIL. Mother! I can't see her. I can't any way in the world. My nerves are all on edge now.

MRS. M. What shall I tell her?

SYBIL. Tell her anything. Tell her I'm sick. Tell her I'm dead, but don't tell her I'm hiding in the garden.

(*SYBIL catches up her hat and cloak and rushes out of the room. The third long honk of the horn is heard just as she disappears.*)

ANNE. Hadn't I better go with her, Mrs. Marlowe?

(*Bell rings again.*)

MRS. M. No, no, Anne, don't leave me. Your presence may be a check upon her. Do stay.

KITTY (*appearing in the doorway*). Mis' Marlowe, vis'ters.

(*KITTY makes way for MRS. TATLOCK and POLLY TATLOCK. MRS. T. is a belligerent looking woman of the respectable village type. She wears a bonnet, dolman and full skirt. POLLY is gotten up for the visit to town in a stiffly starched white frock, a coat to a street suit, and a white lace hat nodding with flowers. She carries an ample bundle. Throughout the interview that follows POLLY speaks no word, but shows her state of mind by facial expression and posture.*)

MRS. T. (*addressing MRS. M.*). Well, Letty, accordin' to promise, we're here, though I had a hard enough time to get Polly to cross the threshold of this house, slighted as she's been, by her only cousin in Redwood County.

MRS. M. (*with forced composure*). Take off your bonnet, Cousin Sally, and we'll talk it all over. How do you do, Polly? I don't know when I've seen you looking so well. May I introduce Miss Loring, our friend and next door neighbor?

MRS. T. You good enough to be included in this weddin' party?

ANNE. Good enough is hardly the word, Mrs. Tatlock. I'm in the wedding party because Sybil and I have been friends ever since the day we first found a hole in the fence that separates our gardens.

MRS. T. Well, we've no hole in the fence around the farm, but the gate, a good patent gate, has been large enough for the whole Marlowe family to drive through many a time—in fried chicken season.

MRS. M. Mrs. Tatlock! Sally! You are really insulting. You surely don't mean to insinuate that we stopped at the farm with fried chicken in mind?

MRS. T. I can't say. All I know is, you seemed to enjoy the chicken, sellin' at thirty-two cents the pound, first rate; and that Polly here was considered good enough to cook 'em, and good enough to jump up from the table to change the plates, in the stylish way you were used to; good enough to wash the dishes after you; good enough——

MRS. M. Cousin Sally! You are really going too far.

MRS. T. Good enough to do anything, except rank as an equal and stand up with her stylish cousin when it come to gettin' married.

MRS. M. Cousin Sally, I'm very sorry you are taking it in this way. We didn't dream Polly would care to be one of the maids.

MRS. T. Care! (*Exchanges glances with POLLY.*) She doesn't care anything about it. Polly has plenty goin' on. What with the Redwood Neighborhood Club and the Missionary Society, she has enough to do without pushing in where she isn't wanted. It's the slight that's hurting her. It's havin' to tell the neighbors she ain't to be a bridesmaid after all.

MRS. M. The neighbors? Why should the neighbors have supposed she was to be in the party?

MRS. T. Why, everybody on our party line heard me tell Mrs. Reverend Jones that Sybil was goin' to have a stylish weddin' and that likely as not she'd be askin' Polly to stand up with her. Warn't that so, Polly?

ANNE. You see, Mrs. Tatlock, Sybil is just having the three girls who graduated with her at Elmwood Seminary. We had a kind of wager among us that the one who married first should have the other three for bridesmaids.

MRS. T. Never said anything to you, I suppose, about the wager her pa made when he was a boy workin' on our farm, did she? A wager on a horse race that he lost and my hus-

band lent him the money to pay. Or warn't that the kind of wager to linger in the memory?

MRS. M. Cousin Sally! My husband has paid you that paltry sum a hundred times over.

MRS. T. Paltry sum, was it! It took him long enough to get around to payin' it—and we land poor as we've been.

MRS. M. Of course you've been land poor, Cousin Sally. We've realized that, and for that reason we did not ask Polly to buy an extravagant gown which she could never use again.

ANNE. Yes, indeed, Mrs. Tatlock. The gowns cost over a hundred dollars, without gloves, slippers or stockings.

MRS. T. What they made out of?

ANNE. White satin.

MRS. M. With lace overdresses.

ANNE. The sashes embroidered in silver.

MRS. T. I've got a good white silk dress, laid away in camphor, as good as new, belonged to Mr. Tatlock's sister, she that died of smallpox in '88. It would cut over real pretty for Polly. Miss Crummy, our dressmaker, was sayin' only yesterday how nice she could make it up. She wanted to try an idee out of her own head of ketchin' up the material on one knee with one of these here cor-sage bouquets. Sound pretty to you?

ANNE. That certainly is original.

MRS. M. Cousin Sally, I'm sorry that you feel as you do about this matter. If I'd known your feelings before, something might have been done, but now it's too late.

MRS. T. Too late? How's that?

MRS. M. } You see—why—why —
ANNE. }

ANNE (*with sudden inspiration*). You see there's no one left for Polly to walk in with.

MRS. T. Who's your company?

ANNE. I'm maid of honor, so I walk alone. Ruth and Martha come together.

MRS. T. What's to hinder you and Polly walkin' two abreast? No law against it, is there?

MRS. M. There's everything against it, Sally. They'd look ridiculous. They're not the same size.

MRS. T. Stand up, Polly, alongside of Miss Loring. (*POLLY edges up to the shrinking ANNE.*) Looks well enough to me.

MRS. M. No, no, it would never do. They look absurd together.

MRS. T. Look enough sight better than that sorrel and bay your pa used to drive when he peddled tins.

MRS. M. My father, General Pompineau, peddle tins ! Peddle tins, Sally Tatlock ! What do you mean ?

MRS. T. Sure he did. Haven't you heard me say so, Polly ? I've heard my mother tell about it a hundred times. She bought a kittle from him—to encourage him.

MRS. M. Sally Tatlock, you have gone too far. I've borne with you and your mischief making ever since I was married. I've listened to your tales, with their variations, for the last time.

MRS. T. Variations ! Do you mean to insinuate, Letty Marlowe, you that never darken the door of a church from one end of the year to the other, that the pillar of the First Church in Bird City tells falsehoods ?

MRS. M. Never darken a church, Sally Tatlock ? How dare you say that of me, when you know that nothing but my poor health keeps me from being in the pew I pay for every Sunday of the world.

MRS. T. Do you pay for it ? You've a name for lettin' your bills go !

MRS. M. Letting my bills go !

MRS. T. That's your reputation. My husband told Frank Marlowe, when he married you, that he'd never be able to lay by a red cent.

MRS. M. Lay by a red cent ! If we haven't, it's because we've spent so much money on Sybil's education and dancing lessons. If your husband had made sacrifices to give Polly accomplishments —

MRS. T. So that's it, is it ? Polly isn't accomplished ! Perhaps she can't kick about barefoot in the shameless way of some. Perhaps not ; but not accomplished—look at this. (*She unwraps POLLY'S bundle and brings forth a crazy quilt.*) Every stitch her own work. A quilt that took first premium at the Redwood County Fair. Show your ribbon, Polly. (*POLLY shows blue ribbon.*) What have you got to say to this ? Mebbe you'd like to know she was plannin' to give it to Sybil for a weddin' present, if things had been different ; but now she won't get it. Wrap it up, Polly. She won't even get to see it. She won't even get to see us, for we won't be at the weddin'. If any one asks why, tell 'em it's because we ain't accomplished enough to be in the company of folks that got their start peddlin' tins for a livin'.

MRS. M. (*hysterically*). Leave the house! Leave the house! I can bear no more.

(*Just as the TATLOCKS turn to leave, KITTY bursts into the room, carrying a large box.*)

KITTY. Mis' Marlowe, here's news for you.

MRS. M. News! News! What kind of news?

KITTY. Miss Ruth Lidgate can't be in the weddin' party. She just got news her grandma's dead. She sent her dress, to use as you see fit.

MRS. T. Open the box. Let's have a look at it.

MRS. M. Don't open it. Don't open it, Kitty. I'm sure it would never do in the world.

MRS. T. For who? Out with it.

MRS. M. For anybody. For nobody. I don't know what I'm saying. My nerves are all gone.

MRS. T. Letty Marlowe, you and me have been cousins by marriage for nearly twenty-five years. Barrin' some spats, we've been, on the whole, pretty good friends all that time; but our friendship stands or falls now. You let Polly try on this dress. If it fits her, you leave her be bridesmaid. If it don't, I won't say another word, and we'll come to the weddin' peaceful.

MRS. M. Oh, Anne, what shall I do?

ANNE. What can you do?

MRS. M. (*to* MRS. T.). Yes, yes, I'll leave it that way; but poor little Sybil. I did so want her to have everything her own way.

MRS. T. Open the box, Polly.

(*Before POLLY has more than taken the box in her arms, SYBIL rushes into the midst of the little group. By one hand she draws the laughing doctor in her wake; in the other she flourishes a bouquet.*)

SYBIL. Mother! Anne! Everybody!

MRS. M. Sybil! What's happened?

SYBIL. I'm the happiest girl in the world! I feel like a bird. I feel like a kite. I feel like an airship.

ANNE. Sybil, are you crazy?

SYBIL. It's all over! I'm married!

MRS. M. Married! What a relief!

ANNE. Married! Without me?

MRS. T. You don't mean it.

SYBIL. It's true! It's true! No more quarreling, nor worrying, nor trying on clothes. When I started for the garden I ran straight into George. He picked me up in his arms, put me in the machine, drove me up to the little church on the hill, and married me. We're leaving this very minute. We're going to the country for two long weeks of rest.

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Twelve females. Costumes modern; scenery unimportant. Plays an hour and a quarter. A humorous picture of the planning of the annual church fair by the ladies of the sewing circle. Full of local hits and general human nature, and a sure laugh-producer in any community. Can be recommended.

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Mrs. HENRY, <i>young, giddy, fond of novels.</i>	Mrs. BROWN, <i>anxious to get new church attendants.</i>
Mrs. JACKSON, <i>the president of the society.</i>	Mrs. ADDISON, <i>very inquisitive.</i>
Mrs. BRETT, <i>on the dinner committee.</i>	Mrs. RIDGELY, <i>sensitive.</i>
Mrs. LEWIS, <i>the minister's wife.</i>	Mrs. OTIS, <i>on the dinner committee.</i>
	Mrs. THOMPSON, <i>decidedly close.</i>
	Mrs. DREW, <i>just married.</i>

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Seven males, four females. Costumes eccentric; scenery unimportant. Plays one hour. A novelty in musical entertainments, introducing the old choir and the new in competition. A novel setting for a concert, offering an interesting contrast between the old music and the new. Lots of incidental fun, character and human nature. Sure to please. Originally produced in Meriden, Conn.

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CHARACTERS

DEACON MATTHEW STERLING.

NED STERLING, *his son.*

MISS PRUDENCE PRUE,

MISS PATRICIA PROSSITT, } *three maiden ladies, his cousins.*

MISS PATIENCE PROUTY,

MR. SILAS HANKUM, *his solicitor.*

ADANIRUM GEORGE WASHINGTON HOBBS, *proprietor of "The Great Forever Circus"*

TONEY O'HARA, *an old clown.*

THE HERR PROFESSOR, *acrobat and flying trapeze man.*

HULDA SCHWARTZ, *strong lady and snake charmer.*

STARLIGHT, *the sawdust queen.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Inside the dressing tent of "The Great Forever Circus."

ACT II.—Three days later. The living room in the Sterling homestead.

ACT III.—Several days later. Inside the dressing tent again.

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Twenty-one males, thirty-one females are called for, but this number can be greatly reduced by "doubling" or by curtailing the length of the entertainment. No scenery required; costumes, modern. Plays about an hour with specialties introduced when called for. This is a humorous picture of a church sale, depending upon its characters and incidents, which are home thrusts in almost any community, for its success. It ends with a sale by auction which may be made a real one, if desired, to actually end up a fair. This entertainment will serve as an admirable frame for a vaudeville entertainment, being designed to introduce songs, dances or recitations at intervals in its action, but may be played wholly without them, as a straight entertainment, if it is preferred. *Price, 25 cents.*

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Seven males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior, one exterior. Plays two hours. An easy and entertaining play with a well-balanced cast of characters. The story is strong and sympathetic and the comedy element varied and amusing. Barnaby Strutt is a great part for a good comedian; "Junior" a close second. Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

JOSIAH ARMSTRONG, *the owner of Red Acre Farm.*

COLONEL BARNABY STRUTT, "*Crawling Codwollers*."

JONAH JONES, *a farm helper.*

SQUIRE HARCOURT, *who holds a mortgage.*

HARRY HARCOURT, *his profligate son.*

DICK RANDALL, *who seeks his fortune.*

TOM BUSBY, *a traveling merchant.*

AMANDA ARMSTRONG, *Josiah's wife.*

NELLIE ARMSTRONG, *driven from home.*

LAURA ARMSTRONG, *a poor, weak sinner.*

MRS. BARNABY STRUTT, *the Colonel's wife.*

"JUNIOR," *adopted daughter of the Strutts.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Living-room of Armstrong's home. Spring.

ACT II.—Garden in front of Armstrong's home. Summer.

ACT III.—Same as Act I. Winter.

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SWEET LAVENDER Comedy in Three Acts. Seven males, four females. Scene, a single interior, costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE THUNDERBOLT Comedy in Four Acts. Ten males, nine females. Scenery, three interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE TIMES Comedy in Four Acts. Six males, seven females. Scene, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

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